

Overview of Shin Splints

May be experiencing:

Pain or discomfort along the front-outside section of the leg or inner edge of the lower leg and calf muscles. Pain may radiate along the foot and ankle.

What's going on:

This may be an overuse injury, often seen in runners and endurance athletes. May also result from improper or outdated footwear, poor form or improper technique, poor flexibility, overtraining or increase of volume (mileage) too quickly, change of surface or over-use of the same surface (treadmill), over-pronation during running.

Suggestions:

You may need a more dynamic warm-up specific to introducing the running movement to the shins and the calves.

Perfect your footstrike and make sure that you aren't striking with your heel. Instead, make sure that you are landing with the middle of the foot and rolling to your toes and then following through by kicking your heel up towards the rear with your toes pointed down. You should have a slight forward lean at the waist to allow gravity to push you forward.

Schedule a proper shoe fitting and/or purchase of new shoes

Rest from running (up to two weeks) and increase non-impact cross-training activities (elliptical, swimming, strength training)

Reduce volume significantly and embrace "movement" rather than full rest. Consider run/walk intervals (my favorites are 2 min run/1 min walk and 3 min run/2 min walk).

Vary your route and run both indoors and outdoors and on pavement and dirt. Try to run your favorite route backwards for a change in terrain.

Roll and massage bottom of foot with soup can, tennis ball or frozen water bottle (30-60 sec)

Massage calves with tennis ball, foam roller or massage gun (30-60 sec)

Increase range of motion of ankle

Ankle range of motion exercises:

[Point/flex/curl toes](#) (while seated on floor with legs fully extended)

[Painting leg raises](#)

Alphabet toes (spell the ABCs, making large capital letters)

Shin and calf exercises:

Low squats on toes – sideways against wall for support

Walk on toes (both forwards and backwards) lifting the toes towards chin

Double heel drops off of step with feet parallel, then attempt in V position (heels together/toes out), then advance to mountain position (toes together/heels out)

[Hamstring salutations](#) (challenges balance and challenges lower leg)

[Walking backwards with arm raises](#) (increases dorsiflexion)

Agility work on toes

Stretches:

[Heel drops](#) (same as the warm-up exercises but holding each side for thirty seconds)

Supine [Hamstring stretches](#) with ankle flexion and dorsiflexion

Partner-assisted shin and calf stretches (oppositional forces inward and outward) in a seated position on the floor with your legs fully extended

[Split stance standing calf stretch](#) (standing)

[Prone calf stretch](#) (kneeling)

Always receive proper advice from your medical professional and get professionally fit by a shoe expert.

To schedule your private running or personal training session, contact runningdivamom@yahoo.com

www.runningdivamom.com